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SCHUMANN AND WAGNER.

[H. F. CHORLEY writes as follows to the London *Athenaeum* of the impressions he has recently received in Leipsic, from the music of these two new lights of "young Germany." We copy it as representing one side of a question which now so divides the world of music abroad. The writer, even if his opinions smack of strong prejudice, is earnest, independent, genuine in the entertainment and expression of them. It will be seen, some of his strictures bear upon the symphony performed last Saturday in Boston.]

Young Germany is in a fever which, should it last, will superinduce an epilepsy fatal to the life of music. As yet, however, the most vehement upholders of the new school are not altogether comfortable in their faith. They meet, protest with all manner of evasions—they fly to the ancient resorts of weakness—they set up the most threadbare screens of incompleteness. It is wonderful, for instance, to remark how long a persevering seeker may wait; how far he may wander before he is admitted to be capable of judging of the compositions of Dr. Schumann. He has always been hearing the wrong work. Should he find quartets (though led by Herr Ernst) dull, monotonous, in idea stale and trifling, he will be referred to piano-forte music. Should this appear to him so licentious in its discords and suspensions that half a dozen false notes on the part of the

player would be of small consequence, he will be requested to believe in some unheard *lied*, more "objective," as the jargon of the day runs. Should he meekly suggest that the best of good *lieder* could hardly establish the reputation claimed for the new master, the upholders of Dr. Schumann will take a last refuge in symphonies; especially in a Symphony in B flat, described by them to be a master-work. This I heard at Leipsic, with less than little satisfaction. In all such cases of disappointment there is an answer ready stereotyped, and thought to be decisive. The listener who cannot be charmed is sure to be reminded how the great works of Beethoven were misjudged at the outset of his career. But the examples are not parallel: Beethoven's works were for a while misunderstood, I venture to reply, because Beethoven was novel. The works of Dr. Schumann will by certain hearers be forever disliked, because they tell us nothing that we have not known before, though we might not have thought it worth listening to. To change the metaphor—as well, it seems to me, might the *pentimenti* and chips of marble hewn off the block and flung to the ground by a Buonarrotti's chisel, if picked up and awkwardly cemented by some aspiring stone-patcher, pass for an original figure, because the amorphous idol was cracked, flawed and stained—had the nose of a *Silenus* above the lip of a *Hebe*, and arms like *Rob Roy's*, long enough to reach its knees—as such *centos* of common phrases and rejected chords be accepted for creations of genius because they are presented with a courageous eccentricity and pretension.

This Symphony in B flat, by Dr. Schumann, for instance, however difficult it may be to admire, is not difficult to follow. The leading ideas, though neither large nor fresh, are sufficiently distinct. The principle *allegro* starts with a bold phrase, and its second subject is simple, but neither are of special interest; and though the listener may recognize occasional ingenuity of treatment, he must screw up his courage to abide the frequent wrench of modulations and discords which are little short of surgical. The second movement, a *largo* in E flat, triple time, has a flowing but insipid subject, on repetition varied by rich figurative accompaniments, after the pattern set by Beethoven in his grand orchestral *adagios*. But whereas he adorned, Dr. Schumann oppresses his theme. The effect is that of dullness laid upon dullness. The *largo* passes off into a *scherzo* in G minor. Here the composer reveals his individuality more clearly than in the former movements, by introducing varieties of rhythm. To succeed in satisfying by such abrupt alternations, requires a combination of sound taste with lively imagination, not here displayed. Whereas Beethoven in his model-works always observed proportion, harmony, and inter-dependence of parts, even when his fancy soared the freest, and when his ideas were most prodigally lavished. Dr. Schumann seems habitually to find any change, whatsoever, admissible, provided it be but a change. Another instance of this oddity

may be cited in the *rondo* to his Piano-forte *Concerto* in A minor; where the monotonous limping of the second subject, in place of piquing the ear, harasses it by producing an effect of lameness which retards the animation of the movement. In the Symphony, after a number of changes having been gone through, the *scherzo* comes to a drawing pause, which is a surprise, not a suspense, since there is no warning or preparation for the cessation of the movement in favor of any other, nor any reason why several more *trios* should not have been added, so curiously is coherence outraged where contrast is intended, and climax missed in search of strange excitement. Lastly comes the *finale*, which has a busy theme; too small in its intricacy for symphonic treatment,—and in its manner not more winning than its predecessors. Less pleasurable music, in short, I have rarely made acquaintance with. Were Dr. Schumann's fancies of the freshest—were his construction felicitous—were his harmonies really new,—they would be heard under heavy disadvantage owing to the ungraciousness of his instrumentation; since, though he must be said to treat his orchestra cleverly, the general effect is heaviness without pomp and harshness without brilliancy. Yet, not to leave a single means untried, our composer does not scruple to introduce the triangle to set off a meagre phrase in his first *allegro*, and condescends to bring back the theme of his *rondo* by a flute *cadenza*, fit enough to prepare the public for its favorite dancer in her most obtusely-angular attitude, but at variance with the spirit of music in which, for the sake of professed depth of thought and sincerity of purpose, we are rudely required to dispense with everything like beauty. This, however, is only according to the use and custom. The mystagogue who has no real mysteries to promulgate would presently lose his public, did he not keep curiosity entertained by exhibiting some of the charlatan's familiar tricks.

Such are a few of the considerations which have occurred to me on making further acquaintance with the writings of the composer put forth by Young Germany as superior to Mendelssohn; nay, as having taken up composition where Beethoven left it, and having done what Beethoven did not—because he could not—do. But Dr. Schumann is as clear as truth and as charming as grace themselves, if he be measured against the opera composer who has been set up by Young Germany, at the composer's own instigation, as the coming man of the stage:—I mean, of course, Herr Wagner. Concerning this gentleman's arrogant self-praise, and the love borne him by his congregation, the *Athenaeum* has already spoken; and I need only say, without qualification or preface, that a hearing of his "Tannhäuser," at Dresden, confirmed to the utmost every impression made by "Lohengrin." Such pleasure as that opera can excite is not musical, but belongs to the choice and treatment of the legend. This is attractive and haunting, because of its fantastic romance, in spite of some defects

in stage arrangement. The tale of Dame Venus, the pagan demon goddess, who held her court in the bowels of the Thuringian hills, with whom a Minnesinger sojourned for awhile, and the fatal consequences of such sojourn had already served as bases for one of Tieck's most charming *Märchen*; and Herr Wagner has not unskillfully interwoven it with one of those idyllic contests for the palm of song which also belong to the knightly old times. There is a thought, too, of great beauty in the last scene; in which, having returned to the *Warburg*, where his temptress dwells, and narrowly escaped from her fatal fascinations, the Tannhäuser is recalled to earthly consciousness by the death-song chanted over the bier of the mortal maiden whose heart had broken for his sake. I cannot but think that it must be sympathy with the spirit of this story which can enable even the German public most soaked in transcendental mysticism to endure the manner in which it has been set to music by its inventor. Herr Wagner hardly practises what he preaches. Resolute on destroying all stage conventions, he is nevertheless determined on making his musical dramas please by every stage accessory and trick. The German managers speak with dismay of a peremptory pamphlet circulated by him, reproving the Dresden theatre for its inefficient and parsimonious execution of the "Tannhäuser," and protesting against the performance of his opera, unless it be dressed out with every conceivable luxury for the eye. Being his own librettist, this novel philosopher in search of truth has no scruple against writing his opera book in rhymed verse, though he will have neither airs nor duets, and only the smallest number of concerted pieces possible. Though he does not hesitate to reduce his singers to mimes whenever it pleases him, Herr Wagner caters his best for the orchestra. Now, what truth is there in the perpetual noise of a band, if literal presentation be the object in view? Why should not the orchestra be silent throughout a whole scene—supposing the terror or pity of the situation to require it? In one respect, however, Herr Wagner is consistent. His aversion to melody is equalled by his poverty in the article. Small matter whether he hides from *motets* or whether *motets* hide from him, there are only two subjects meriting such a name in the "Tannhäuser," these being the themes wrought into the overture. For, though a tolerably brilliant March, in the second act, sounds a marvel of beauty in the midst of such a wearisome chaos of spasmodic sounds, it is rhythmical rather than melodious. Yet, if ever there was a tale claiming an entirely opposite mode of treatment, it is this. The magic Bower of Venus, with its nymphs, bacchanals, and syrens demanding something more voluptuously sweet than such a grotesque mixture of flute and cymbal as would fitly serve for table-music to the wicked and deformed old fairy *Carabossa*, when she sits down to dine on her cookery sauced with poisons. The herdboys' song on the rock in the morning-scene trails along rapidly, independent of the pilgrim's hymn with which it was meant to be combined. The contest of minstrels resembles nothing so much as a series of dreary sermons delivered by several men, in neither recitative nor aria, to a harp accompaniment. Alas! out of their stupefying preachment there is not to be extracted even as little as "that sweet word Mesopotamia," on the gain of which the old woman went home satisfied that she had not lost her time at church. The final *stretto* after their tiresome prosing was as welcome as is a glimpse of daylight to men waking from a night-mare, merely because it contains a few bars of climax for the voices which are successively introduced, and subsequently grouped according to the commonest Italian receipt. How low must the opera goer be brought when he can think of Verdi with complacency and longing!—in the last act, monologue frantic succeeds to monologue whining; and how either can be learnt by the singers is a mystery.—But conceding that "Tannhäuser" is to be considered merely as a recitative opera written after the leading fashion of Lulli, with an orchestra tenfold stronger than Mlle. de Montpensier's

marmite ever dreamed of, it is a failure, if tried by its own rules. The recitative is bad and untrue; because it possesses none of those cadences ministering repose to the ear which are indispensable to the recitation of verse, and which habitually belong to the parlance of every civilized human being. Perpetual strain, perpetual emphasis, perpetual awkwardness of interval,—these are Herr Wagner's materials for that true declamation which is to carry out with improvements the famous canons of Gluck, and to make of music that utterly unmusical thing in which all the dilettanti delight.

Yet more, in the use of that huge conventionalism, the orchestra—to which every other conventionalism is to be sacrificed—Herr Wagner does not seem to me felicitous in "Tannhäuser." The overture pleased me more when I heard it given by Dr. Liszt's two marvellous hands on the piano than when it was rendered by Herr Reisinger's capital and sensitive band. There is a want of proportion and of richness in the filling up, owing to which, certain of the effects meant by the composer to be among his strongest come forth but feebly. This is to be felt in his treatment of the introduction, and yet more strongly in the *coda*, where a whirling and busy figure for the violins (owing to ill calculated sonority) is overborne by the harsh and blatant brass instruments, in place of being wrought up together with them into a rich and well-balanced *fortissimo*. Not only are the singers throughout the opera tormented as concerns their intrinsic occupation, but the acutest tones of the violin, or the group of sourest flute notes, are employed high above the male voices, without the latter being indulged with due support from beneath. After the sarcastic and arrogant depreciation of MM. Meyerbeer and Berlioz published by Herr Wagner, the world had a right to expect from him something far more rich, brilliant, and peculiar in his instrumentation than they have received. But the discoveries and innovations made by his betters he employs in the uncouth fashion of a school-boy; writing audaciously in proportion as his real knowledge is limited.

Such without exaggeration are my impressions of "Tannhäuser,"—a work not to be endured to the end without melancholy wonder at the pains it has cost, and yet more painful amazement at its being found admirable by recipients from whom a truer taste might have been expected. There is comfort, however, in thinking that beyond Herr Wagner in his peculiar manner it is hardly possible to go. The saturnal of licentious discord must have here reached its climax. It is true, the "conventionalisms" of the orchestra have still to be destroyed;—only, were this done, since all pretext of music would cease, the thing produced would no longer be within the domain of Art, but would rather come under the care of a society for the suppression of nuisances.

Letter from New York.

OUR FRIEND TONWACKER—"DISCIPLINE"—MUSICAL SILHOUETTES—ALBONI IN OPERA.

NEW YORK, JANUARY, 1853.

MY DEAR DWIGHT:—In this great whirling vortex of a city I have enjoyed no pleasanter hours than those I have spent in our friend Tonwacker's studio. I call his room a studio, for though he is not a painter, nor sculptor, nor designer, he is an artist of the highest grade, and his room is one of the most artistic places I know. We often meet with painters and sculptors who love music. Tonwacker is a musical artist, who loves pictures and statues, and all forms of beauty. And indeed how can the sister arts ever be separated? Yet we do meet with strange cases of divorce. Tonwacker's room is a little temple of taste and beauty. Though a devoted priest at his altar of a grand piano, around which cluster piles on piles of the music of the best masters of present and bygone days, T. adorns his sanctum with the choicest engravings, statues, vases and

other beautiful things; so that you feel as you recline on his ottomans, and gaze around, a sense of completeness in these arrangements alone, and hardly ask for a subtler, deeper beauty. Yet you have it—and it flows out from that grand rosewood altar when in contact with the magical finger-ends of him who ministers before it.

Delicious Sunday mornings—better than going to church—delicious evenings, those—when I have sat there, perhaps with a sympathetic friend or two, all in the mood of it, burying myself in the cushions, with one of my friend's cigars fresh lighted, listening, dreaming, and looking around at his Claudes and Raphaels and Venuses. But his music will not let you dream: it is so intense, it is so impossible not to be all ear and soul while he is giving you such fine renderings of Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Schubert, Schumann, Chopin, Liszt, and I know not how many more—all noble strains that make you sigh that they are so fleeting and you cannot stamp them on your brain and memory as you do on your heart, forever. True, deep-souled artist, is my friend. Nothing but the best contents him. How expressive, how splendid is his execution! How the room vibrates and rings as he dashes through the marvellous intricacies of the music! Luxuriously lounging on his ottomans and slowly puffing the aromatic weed, I am in a little Elysium for the time. My eye naturally seeks some picture on the walls in correspondence with the music. Delicious, dreamy, delicately sensuous Chopin begins, and I am floating at once in the luminous distances and Arcadian temples of Claude. Grand, heroic, melancholy Beethoven leads me to a bronze gladiator, or a stormy waterfall foaming over the rocks—Mendelssohn, to a Madonna and child of Raphael—yet all in turn lead me through all the shades of feeling, changing from one mood to another with magical modulation—and I can fix no comparisons or correspondences between music and picture; for it is the privilege and glory of this divine Art to present an epitome of the ever shifting lights and shades that play incessantly at the bottom of the heart and imagination.

What select and private seasons of worship these are of Sunday mornings or of secular evenings in this little tabernacle of Art, you, my dear editor friend, know as I do. We have met there more than once.

And ah! do you remember that evening of thorny and bitter disappointment, when a choice number of us were assembled there, some to play and some to listen, and all to enjoy, hungry and thirsty for music—we had all set our hearts upon a summer night of ambrosia and nectar—and how our expectations were pitched neck and heels out of window by the messenger from the room below, from the gentleman who must needs be ill of a nervous fever that very night of all nights in the year, and the grand piano must not be touched the whole evening! Our friend had just had the instrument newly tuned, and had run over a little preliminary flourish on the keys, like a grace before meat. The wax candles were blazing freshly on the piano and on the tables—the feast was set, the guests were met, or dropping in one by one—some half dozen of us—when there was a tap at the door—it was the messenger—dark messenger of doom, from below—with a request that Herr Tonwacker would refrain from playing that evening. It was a bucket of cold water on the fire of our hopes. Never shall I forget the

sullen, blank despair on the face of our host. There was no help for it. Social duties must triumph sometimes over private inclinations, and even divine Harmony be silenced. There was Dirk, the violinist; there was Kaufmann, the pianist; there was the Bohadji, and you, and myself. All dropped in—all nearly dropped down when made aware of the dismal fact. There was no particular use in swearing, yet some of us swore inwardly. I am sorry for human nature, but there was no pity for the poor individual below with the nervous fever. Why must he interfere with us? Why couldn't he be moved to another room? Was it not a hotel, and had not our host a right to do as he pleased? It was the first time such a message was ever sent to him. And we stared blankly at each other, silently chafing, like caged eagles. It was clearly a case of "Nothing to be done." But a thought strikes our host. There was a house he knew, very near, where there was a grand piano, and the family he believed were out of town. We might adjourn there. He would go and see. He went; he returned; he shook his head. No—the family were still there, with visitors besides. Nothing was to be done but sit down, gulping in our grief, and (some one said) "talk scandal." One of us deliriously muttered a dim suggestion about going down town to a certain piano-warehouse to satisfy our thirst for harmony—miserable ghost of a hope! It only raised a ghastly smile on our faces. So we sat down and sought in social talk to find a vent for our feelings, which more than once overflowed in noisy manifestation; and I fear the sick gentleman reposed very little after all—for though silence is "golden and divine," we were not her worshippers that night. We swallowed our wrath, but we were wicked boys still, and felt it hard that the river of our spirits should be dammed, however we might apply the process to other things. If you rub a cat's back the wrong way, there will be sparks. We were rubbed the wrong way that night, and the unpleasant friction was the occasion of many brilliant sparkles of wit and merriment, spite of our griefs. Still, I remember that evening as a mysterious ordination of Providence. "They call this discipline!" faintly murmured our epicurean Bohadji. We pocketed our disappointment, and I felt as if it was one of the miniature pocket-editions of the great Riddle of Destiny.

Slighter interruptions to the flow of soul, in our friend's room, sometimes occur. The other morning Mr. Microcosm stopped in after church, and in the intervals of the performance, threw off little snapping sparks of criticism on the distinguished singers he had heard abroad. They were like flint pebbles thrown into the flowing water—we turned from gazing on the beauty of the glassy river, and looked to see who threw the stones. They succeeded in attracting a little notice to himself, Mr. M., and showed him to be a man of experience, a savant among the singing stars of Europe. Then there was Mr. Toozy-moozy, who looked delighted with everything that Tonwacker played, sometimes murmuring his approbation aloud, and looking around at the company. If Mr. Microcosm knew much, he certainly could feel, and determined to let all know, by smiles and nods and bravos, how his susceptible heart was stirred within him. And there was Angelo, who said less, but felt and knew more than he uttered. It was a pleasure to listen with him

and to meet his eye at some delicious passage. There needs very few words after good music. "*Il vero omaggio alla musica sta in silenzio*," say the Italians.

Speaking of the Italians, I heard the other night our magnificent Alboni in the *Sonnambula*. How well she adorns this familiar old favorite! She poured herself out in those delicious melodies, showing us all the heights and depths, all the richness, variety and cultivation of her matchless voice. There is no effort in her singing, and it seems to come as easily as talking. It is truly the "bird's warble." Her performance of Amina quite satisfies the sense. But how miserably she is supported! Signor Pellegrini, the new tenor, so far from supporting any one will hardly himself be supported. It will not do for him to sing on the same stage with Alboni. Barili sang "*Vi ravviso*" badly enough. His notes were often so false and uncertain that it was positive pain to listen. The rest of the company chirped and twittered like so many sparrows. The choruses, however, were pretty fairly done.

But now I must say *addio*! Some time I may send you another letter—that is if I find anything to say and any time to say it. Yours, X.

Puritan Dread of Instrumental Music.

The Portland Eclectic has the following curious reminiscences. The first is from a correspondent.

In the year 1720, one hundred and thirty-three years ago, in a discourse entitled "The Joyful Sound, reaching to both the Indies," the Rev. Cotton Mather thus speaks of the use of instruments in the praise of God:

"The Sound of the Silver Trumpets which entertained the Ancient Israelites, in and for their solemn assemblies, was no less Typical than Musical. In these days of the New Testament, we have the substance of the Instrumental Musick, which was of old used in the Worship of God; the Shadow is vanished away. The Shadow was of old confined unto the Temple; but the Substance we have now in every Synagogue. The usage of Instrumental Musick in our Public Worship of God, hath been long since disrelished among His Faithful People. Justin Martyr long ago exploded it. Yea, Aquinas himself, as late as less than Five hundred Years ago, decried it. Indeed it was one of the Last Things which the Man of Sin introduced, in the Worship of our SAVIOUR, which he had already filled with a Multitude of Superstitions. We will then for the present look on the Jewish Trumpets, and Organs too, as a part of the Abrogated Pedagogy."

This extract is precisely as it was printed at the time of its delivery. It is interesting to notice the change in the notions of the appropriateness of church music which a century and a quarter has produced upon the minds of "His Faithful People." Now the Organ seems to furnish a large part of the foundation upon which to raise the structure of church pride.

Apropos to which, the editor relates an anecdote of

WOODEN SINGING.—Our correspondent's article on another page reminds us of the pertinacity with which an old divine of our acquaintance resisted the introduction of instrumental aid in the praises of the sanctuary.

The "young people," desiring to improve their music, had brought into church a viol and flute, or some other wind instrument, although aware of the old minister's dislike to "wooden singing," which he classed with "paper preaching," as entirely destitute of the spirituality becoming the house of God. When he saw the offending instruments in the hands of the performers, he refused to read his hymn as usual, and proceeded

to do his own singing without the assistance of the choir.

On a subsequent occasion the instruments were brought in and concealed until the hymn was read. They were then brought out and the singing commenced, blowing and scraping included. But the triumph of the orchestra was short. Near the close of the first stanza, the parson, not being able to restrain his holy indignation longer, said to the choir with a very decided aspect and tone—
ONE VERSE!

A letter from Trieste, in the Breslan newspaper, states: "Among the remarkable sights in our town must be recorded the appearance of the celebrated composer Rossini, who has purchased property here with a fortune of 2,000,000 francs. Rossini is a great amateur of fishing, and may be seen every day, as he puts out to sea in his elegant and commodious gondel, to entrap with net and hook the brisk inhabitants of the deep; but it is far more comical to see the corpulent old maestro, girt with a white apron, sitting as a salesman in the market, where he himself turns his booty into money; for he is no less a mercantile than a musical genius."

From the Foreign Quarterly Review, for Jan. 1845.

Music in Germany and Belgium.

(Continued)

Spohr and Mendelssohn are, in England, the only acknowledged representatives of German art, while their country, truly viewed, is actually an ant-hill of musical labor. Performers no longer wait to have compositions written for them, but compose for themselves, and the capacity to execute this task respectably is almost as common as the talent of the solo player. The numerous specific distinctions in the old-fashioned generic term musician are thus abolished, and to be in modern times an artist on the violin, piano, or any other instrument, includes, at least, such a knowledge of composition as a man may require to exhibit himself, and more particularly to dispose favorably in his concerto of the rarest feats which he may have mastered in his private practice. By this prudent economy nothing is lost to the player, however his composition may suffer in point of connection, unity, and true inspiration. The music shops of Leipzig, Frankfurt, and Berlin, teem with these "occasional" compositions, fantasias, &c., the productions of virtuosi for themselves, which having performed with "unbounded applause," they commit to paper and print during the first ebullition of popular astonishment. These things, evanescent as the spring fashions, are highly characteristic of modern Germany, where no one is too poor to publish, or so unhappy as not to find a publisher. The last century was one of manuscripts, of which some memorable specimens have struggled into light—the present one, notwithstanding its luxuriance of paper and print, seems to address itself principally to a posterity of trunk-makers and cheese-mongers.

[Here follows a notice of instrumental composers of the second rank, and of GADE, which we have already copied in our notice of the Second "Germania" concert. See Journal, Vol. II. No. 11.]

We can do little more than indicate the state of instrumental solo composition, such an enormous troop of artists and adventurers at present occupy that profitable field. The piano-forte is in an anomalous state:—with a mechanism brought to such perfection as should render it one of the most delightful of instruments, it is but too frequently employed in public to delight gaping curiosity by a low species of harlequinade in which music has no share.

We can sympathize with the enthusiasm which may naturally arise on seeing the almost invincible difficulties of the mechanism of the piano-forte thoroughly mastered; but this sensation is transient, the spell of surprise is at length broken by the mere congregation of the wizards, and, without music to fall back upon, how poor the chance of a permanent reputation! The Liszt,

the Thalbergs, the Döhlers, the Meyers, *et hoc genus omne*, what is their reputation as musicians—as composers? Nothing—they have absolutely produced nothing but the pompous and imposing inanities which form their private exercises. The profit, which any one may fairly calculate upon who has accomplished the art of making the public stare, offers a great bait to cupidity, and life, shifting the scene from town to town, sweeping in the proceeds of performances, and amid the perpetual jollity of new acquaintance, may have its charms. But the poet musician, without quitting the solitude and stillness of his chamber, we must not forget, has entertained still greater audiences. And how much more nobly, let HUMMEL bear witness, whose delightful church and chamber music have associated, with the sylvan retirement of Weimar, feelings as strong as any that Goethe or Schiller have connected with it in poetry. We mention this master, whose solid works are before the public of Europe, the rather because his appointment is now possessed by Liszt, a man who has produced nothing; for which degeneracy how he will answer to his patrons, or to the “inexorable judge within,” is more than we can tell. Liszt made Kapellmeister at Weimar, and Droyschok at Darmstadt, may encourage ingenuous youth to practise the scales and emulate the *Tarentella furiosa* and *Galope Chromatique*—hardly to undergo the severer ordeal of contrapuntal study. But though a new *Hexenmeister* of this bad school, a Dane named Willmers, has appeared, again out-Heroding Herod, we trust that it is nodding to its fall. A strong party, supported by all the good taste of the country, has declared in favor of the classical in form and style, and endeavored to rescue the genius and character of the piano-forte from the eccentric usage which threatens to overwhelm them. Sonatas of the old solid construction are welcome revivals at the present day, not only from Spohr, Mendelssohn, and Thalberg, but from younger pens desirous to identify themselves with music at any rate, even should the wish rather than the accomplishment be discerned. This is a hopeful symptom in the music of Young Germany; another peculiarly appropriate to this age of restoration and conservatism is the passionate recognition of the merits of the old masters. Mortier de Fontaine, a pianist of celebrity, has not only performed in public several of Handel's concertos for keyed instruments, but has found sufficient encouragement to publish them. Then, again, we now possess, for the first time, collected into one uniform edition, in ten volumes, beautifully printed, and as carefully edited by Czerny, the whole of the piano-forte or Clavier works of J. S. BACH, among which are several most exquisite fugues never yet published. A work repeatedly commenced by various continental houses, and as often laid aside through distrust of public encouragement; a work the essence of which is abstract and remote, and whose beauties are ideal and profound, is a testimony to the progress of the actual musical world not easily confuted. How delightful to the musician to be enabled to drink at the same Helicon which nourished the infant genius of Mendelssohn! While we listen to the remains of this immortal master, proved by his chromatic fantasia, the undoubted founder of the modern school, for the modulation therein exhibited, and that of Beethoven seems absolutely coeval, we can scarcely believe in the existence of a public, eager for waltzes or trifles of mere ostentation, ambitious of difficulty for its own vain display—still less in that of artists willing to pander to them.

[To be continued.]

For Dwight's Journal of Music.

From my Diary. No. XIV.

NEW YORK, Jan. 16. Turning over the leaves of a volume of the *Leipsic Signale*, the following passage from a letter dated Utrecht, March 19, 1848, caught my eye, and seems to be worth translation.

“Two years since we made the acquaintance of the young pianist, ALFRED JAEHL. He has just returned to

us, and appeared in the fourth City Concert in the *Minor Concerto* of Mendelssohn, the *Fantasia sur la Sonambula* of Thalberg, a *Study* by Carl Mayer, and *La Pompa di Festa* of Willmers. His playing is now hardly to be recognized, for he has most completely overcome his former faults, and has reached a very high point of perfection—such, indeed, as to raise the astonishment of all his hearers. At the present time this youth is certainly one of the greatest piano-forte virtuosos of our times, which is saying not a little, when we consider how many great performers we now have. Herr Jaell was called out, and gave in return a *Fantasia “Jo civat,”* a posthumous work of von Weichern, a former pupil of Friedrich Schneider, which called forth renewed applause and “bravos.”

Jan. 16, Sunday, 3 P. M. A military company is marching up Broadway, from a funeral, to the music of a drum and fife, playing an old familiar muster-field air, I believe the “White Cockade.” Good Sunday music!

Jan. 17. Positive, comparative and superlative:
GOOD.—A city paper says of Alboni in “*Sonnambula*,” “When Alboni sang ‘*Ah! Non Credea*,’ the applause was vehement; but ‘*Non Più Meata*’ was the gem which bore the palm of an encore.”

BETTER.—Another paper says:
“On Monday she (Alboni) appears in ‘*Norma*,’ as *Lucrèzia Borgia*, at the Broadway.”

BEST.—A third has the following:
“*Metropolitan*.—Mad. Alboni, at the request of numbers of her admirers, will give a grand sacred oratorio, at the above hall, this evening. The principal musical gems selected are the ‘*Stabat Mater*,’ Prayer from ‘*Moses in Egypt*,’ and ‘*Cujus Animam*.’”

Hugely pleased last evening with the programme of the “world-renowned” Alboni’s “Grand Oratorio of Sacred Music”—not by the usual typographical errors alone, but by some of the parts as given. For instance:—

Recitative and Chorus, “*Facit Ardent*.”
Quatour, “*Finnati Vulnerati*.” (Wounded Fishes?)
Cavatina and Solo, “*Facit Portem*.”
Quatour, (a sole Voci) “*Quando Capus Morietur*.”

Was nearly as much delighted with the Grand Overture of “*Stabat Mater*,” by Mercadante, Full Orchestra.

Heaven forbid that I should insinuate that Mercadante did not compose this magnificent overture—but really it seemed throughout as if it could only have flowed from the inexhaustible genius of the Music Director himself—our Paganini! As it is not to be supposed that Mercadante would compile a “Grand Overture of *Stabat Mater*” from the themes and airs of Rossini’s work, tacked and stitched together any way, the familiar strains of the *Inflammatus*, the *Quis est homo*, the *Cujus animam*, the violoncello opening, &c. &c. occurring in it, only prove that the deep religious feelings of Signor Saverio Mercadante, and Signor Giacomo Rossini, when roused by the sad poetry of the *Stabat Mater*, found vent in strains note for note the same, so far as possible—when one was manufacturing an overture, and the other composing music to the words! Vivat Signor Mercadante!

N. B. The Overture was applauded—some.

N. B. No. 2. Curious, is it not, that the same performers, under one leader, give us light and shade beautifully, under another, play right square through, as though there were no such thing. The horn-playing was the best I ever heard in America.

A correspondent tells us that Handel’s “*Messiah*” was first performed in Boston, at King’s Chapel, fifty-seven years ago. Mr. Selby, a Londoner, was the organist. It is probably well known that the organ, still used in this church (now Rev. Dr. Peabody’s) was selected by Handel a year or two more than a century ago. Its diapasons are still of the richest and sweetest known.

Addison tells us in his *Spectator*, (140 years ago,) that Handel was called the “Son of Apollo,” the “Orpheus of the age,” when he composed in a fortnight his opera, *Rinaldo*.

The catalogue of the music in the British Museum fills sixty-seven folio volumes.

Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, JAN. 22, 1853.

Concerts of the Past Week.

ALFRED JAEHL is now, we suppose, generally acknowledged the foremost pianist who has visited this country. Evident to any one, who once hears him play, in whatever music, is the brilliancy of his touch, the liquid purity and smoothness and consummate finish of his passages, the well-conceived, clear, elegant rendering of the whole piece, with just regard to light and shade and fair proportion, and full bringing out of every point, and above all, the happy certainty and ease with which he does it. But one must know him, as Boston audiences have now had such frequent opportunities to know him, throughout the widest range of music, of all styles and authors, old and new, to feel wherein he is most wonderful. He is master of most that has become classical, from Bach and Beethoven, to Mendelssohn and Chopin, and of all the bewildering brilliancies of the Thalbergs, Liszts, Litolfs, Willmers, and all the minor would-be Titans that try to take the Olympian heights by storm, piling up Ossa upon Pelion of new and frightful finger tasks. No matter how terrifically swift and tortuous and crowded the fantasia, or how learned, closely written, fraught with meaning the sonata, trio, or concerto, he performs it, so that not a note or expressive feature of the work is lost or marred, as if it were mere child’s play to him, and as if he never knew or dreamed of knowing any difficulties.

He certainly possesses the genius of execution. It is not any possible method or amount of practice that could place another by his side, unless equally gifted. We have almost thought he played with *too* much ease. He revels in these exercises of ready reading, facile rendering and retentive memory. There is some analogy between his playing and Alboni’s singing. The power comes to him as it were without prayer or study, or the inward soul-struggles of the serious artist. Better artists we have perhaps known, in the larger senses of the term, but never a better pianist. Jaell has not always been true to the mission required of such rare powers; he has been prone to forget himself in the gay sunshine of applause; he has been too willing to play trivial things, as if the piano were a plaything and his debt chiefly to the younger and more thoughtless portion of his audience. Perhaps this was but in the smallest part his fault; older artists (with how few exceptions!) have set him the example; and the public is at fault for listening too approvingly, and indirectly seeming to demand, the music which but tickles idle senses. Jaell having the power to make true audiences, has been too complaisant in letting audiences make him. Yet, so far as we know, he has always met a serious challenge manfully and shown that he could “face the music” set before him by the most exacting classicist. And it is due to him to own, that in the two winters he has spent in Boston, he has interpreted to us a pretty long list of compositions of the nobler masters. With Jaell there are identified in our memory two Concertos of Mendelssohn and one of Beethoven, (which is thrice as much of that kind of music as we have heard from any other); two or three trios each of

the same masters; many works of Chopin, &c., &c. And finally at this grand concert, on the 11th, which it is our pleasant duty now to chronicle, he has introduced us to one of the most imposing specimens of ultra-modern compositions, which in the opinion of many (himself included) is as truly classic as it is strange and difficult. We mean the "Symphony Concerto" by the Brunswick virtuoso, Littolf.

Littolf is said to be a man of remarkable talent. Daring and adventurous he is, ingenious and determined in carrying through strange ideas, in strange forms and strange combinations of instruments,—as any one might know that listened to the work in question. But whether he have genius as well as talent, whether a poetic fire glow at the heart of his inventions, or whether there be much heart in them, remains very doubtful to us after a single hearing. It was a work of extraordinary difficulties, in the grand symphonic form, with four movements, tasking the perceptive and executive faculties of the pianist to the utmost, while the several themes were so passed round from instrument to instrument, and all so closely interwoven, that orchestra and piano-forte alike seemed principal, or rather claimed attention as one whole. It was Jaell's crowning triumph in the way of execution; octave passages of incredible rapidity, lightning-like leaps from bass to treble, and all sorts of difficulties were achieved, with only a little more air of determined concentration, but with his usual complete success. The "Germanians" of course did full justice to the orchestral parts. The novelty and hardihood of the composition piqued our curiosity at first; but we confess to a sense of weariness before it was through. Ingenious it was and bold, but did the whole grow naturally and genially out of first germs, or was it not mechanically forced through? What shall we say of that opening theme, consisting of two notes, tonic and dominant, a theme which the kettle drums could repeat in their turn,—a sort of empty, rhythmical mould of two bars, into which no glowing metal seemed to be poured! Curiously enough it was wrought through into a compact symphonic or sonata movement, and one admired the brilliant effects continually occurring; but it sank not into the soul like a symphony, or even a concerto, of Beethoven or Mendelssohn.

Then what commonplace and trivial, what almost Yankee country dance melodies were those in the *allegro vivace*, which kept the little octave flute so pearly busy! But perhaps we need to be enlightened by a second hearing. The piece plainly did not suffer in the manner of performance.

Mr. Jaell's next piece was the Ballade (in G minor, op. 23) by Chopin,—a piece as full of poetry and meaning as it was suited to call out all the young virtuoso's executive powers. How magnificently he played it! As a light afterpiece he gave the Willmiers bird trills. His own fantasia on *Le Val d'Andorre* was brilliant and graceful, but otherwise leaves no distinct impression in our mind. Little CAMILLA URSO played like a ripened artist with him the "Tell" duet of Osborne and De Beriot, as well as the Fifth Air Variée (solo) by the latter.

The German "LIEDERKRANZ," under HERR KREISSMANN, gave some admirable specimens of nice ensemble, light and shade, *crescendo*, &c., in the singing of four fine German four-part songs. Especially beautiful was the last piece; *Unter*

allen Gipfeln ist Ruh (sung also at the Opening Festival of the Music Hall). There were about forty male singers, all unprofessional, and in fact mechanics; but it was encouraging to hear such excellent music produced by so indifferent an average of voices. Herr Kreissmann was honored in his pupils.

The two overtures by the GERMANIANS, Mendelssohn's to "Athalia" and Beethoven's to "Leonora," were a concert in themselves,—to us the most satisfying music of the evening, and we never listened to them with more unalloyed pleasure.

Mr. Jaell's audience, though the Music Hall had capacity for many more, was very large,—at least fifteen hundred persons,—which proved the high estimation in which he is held, seeing that he can be heard at every Wednesday afternoon rehearsal of the Germanians for an almost nominal price.

FOURTH MUSICAL FUND CONCERT.—This drew the largest audience of the season, and was in many respects the most creditable to the orchestra of all its efforts thus far. Signs of improvement, of new life, new unanimity, new ambition, were evident throughout the performances. And for this we thankfully give credit, and upon it base excellent hopes for the future, notwithstanding that the principal work of the evening, Schumann's Symphony, suffered not a little in the representation. This was to be expected. The Symphony was new and strange in style, and extremely difficult. The orchestra, it is well known, is just passing out of a protracted crisis, and is still in a transition state. It is a pity that the work of re-organization did not take place in the Summer vacation, instead of now in the middle of a concert season and in the very thick of the winter's campaign. Instead of severely noticing defects, it is our duty to read and reflect encouragement in the fact that the society is fairly in the way now of improvement. The orchestra has shrunk some in numbers, and will ere long, we trust, find reinforcement; what is left is more homogeneous and select; yet a certain drag of hacknied routine, a certain spiritless, mechanical habit remained to be overcome. The new leader, Mr. SUCK, who seems happily to have won the confidence of the musicians, called suddenly to the helm, with small room for rehearsal between the concerts, and knowing well that an orchestra can only be re-animated and built up by degrees, is forced to try experiments. And a very natural experiment it was to endeavor to stimulate them with a sense of overcoming difficulties, and lift them out of the dull ruts of habit by the excitement of some new and arduous enterprise. Hence for once the Schumann Symphony was ventured. Under such circumstances an approximate success was to be hailed as great encouragement.

We doubt not, very various opinions were formed of this composition among the audience. To many its novelty (without superficial brilliancy) and its very richness, fullness, earnestness of meaning made it dull, and would have made it so, had it been ever so perfectly presented. On the other hand, the thoroughly initiated, intimate admirers of Schumann (what few there were there present) were naturally keenly sensitive to every fault of execution, and could scarce contain themselves from crying out about the murder of

their hero. For ourselves, while not unconscious of shortcomings in the performance, amounting in several instances to positive blunders and misfigurings of important passages, we were yet agreeably surprised (and so we know were many others) by the clear and forcible impression of the whole work which we found stamped upon us. If parts were blurred and confused; if here and there passages were roughly rendered; if movements were unduly hurried or retarded (a matter about which we could only surmise, not knowing the work beforehand); if flutes and oboes and violins sometimes returned a thin and feeble answer to the over-ponderous blasts of the trombones—still an imposing, although now and then obscured, outline loomed before us of a grand, consistent, original, inspired whole. It moved us to respect and to desire deeper acquaintance with the new symphonist whom Chorley (see article on first page) and the London critics sneer at as the mystagogue of "Young Germany." We must own, too, to much more pleasant impressions of this same symphony in B flat, now that we have (although so imperfectly) heard it, than were promised us in the last letter of our friend in Leipsic (See *Journal* for Jan. 8th.)

Of the symphony itself we attempt now no description. We trust the orchestra will yet further study it, till the warmest Schumann-ite may find the whole of his ideal of it in their presentation; and, when so mastered, may it claim another hearing before the half-convinced or wholly unbelieving public.

The overtures to Spohr's *Jessonda*, and to "William Tell," the latter especially, were given with unusual delicacy and precision. That of Spohr was new to us; but so much of beauty was realized, with such freshness of well-blended coloring and fineness of outline, that we actually thought of the "Germanians." We must confess we are losing the relish of orchestral arrangements, like that of Schubert's *Lob der Thronen*, played with such acceptance to the audience. We are aware, and thankfully, that these things have superseded of late things still less artistic, as arrangements from Verdi, Polkas, Potpourris, &c., and that they have served to interest a larger public in the divine melodies of Schubert. But orchestral opportunities are too precious, not to be jealously used for making acquaintance with our large musical legacy of nobler treasures which shine through the medium of the orchestra alone. And does not every winter prove, that the more symphonies are played, the wider and more earnest audience they find. What are the busy 'requests' and *encores* of a few thoughtless people, fond of polkas and light music, compared to the silent, deeper, and less outwardly demonstrative feeling of the real mass of the musical community? We have enjoyed these "arrangements," both as given by the "Germanians" and by Mr. Suck; they have raised the popular standard several degrees; but we are confident that our audiences can already bear and will ere long demand even stronger meat than this, unless the "sweet-meats" party should again prevail, to the destruction of all healthy tone in the general musical stomach. Thank Heaven and thank Beethoven, we do believe that we are past that danger.

We congratulate the Society on the accession of so artistic a horn player as Mr. HAMANN. His solo was well selected, an expressive Adagio, not too long, and without the fashionable nuisance of

absurd variations; and from the sweet, pure, feelingly modulated tones of his instrument it breathed like a mysterious voice of melody from forest depths. All was within the true sphere and genius of the instrument.

Miss LEHMANN sang with admirable effect, if not with all the Italian flexibility and pathos, the *Una Voce* and *Ernani, involami*; and her two English songs, especially "Comin' thro' the Rye," in which she adopted Jenny Lind's embellishments, were quite felicitous and full of spirit.

☞ The first monthly number of the *Illustrated Magazine of Art* is on our table. Its appearance is quite English. There is a refined solidity, a thoroughness and exactness about its articles and woodcuts that makes one think that both must have been produced in England. Both are excellent. There are sixty-four solid royal octavo pages of well-written matter, such as we rarely meet in periodicals. That on the history of the House of Commons is quite instructive, and is illustrated by a finely engraved interior of the new hall. Good representations are given of the whole series of Retzsch's "Pegasus in Harness." Also portraits of Chancer and of Goldsmith, some fine landscapes, the Wellington funeral pageant, and illustrations of the whole process of steel pen making, besides other choice and interesting matter. It is far above all other pictorial serials in this country, and costs but twenty-five cents per monthly number. Redding & Co. have it.

A VETERAN GONE.—"The trumpet shall sound" no more with the mortal breath of JOHN BARTLETT. He departed this life on Sunday, at the age of fifty-three, and was buried from Rev. Mr. Kirk's church on Wednesday, followed to the grave by his old comrades of the Musical Fund Society and Brigade Band. He was one of the founders of the latter at least thirty years ago. John Bartlett was a type of the American musician of the past generation. He was the hero of our music-loving boyhood, before we had known artists in that line. Yet in the new and higher dispensation amid which we live, shall we be ungrateful for that trumpet whose tones are associated with almost the earliest impulse given to our love of music, in those old Brigade Band marches, (better marches than they play now-a-days, we ween), and since then with Handel's "The Trumpet shall sound" and "Let the bright Seraphim," and with that long swelling A, that holds out so gloriously through that sublimest episode in the Scherzo of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony? We have better artists to do those things for us now, but Bartlett's trumpet shall not be forgotten by a Boston boy.

Musical Intelligence.

Local.

The "GERMANIA" Concert to-night will be a rich one. It opens with the descriptive Symphony of SROHE, "The Consecration of Tones," a work full of skilfully contrasted beauties, and remembered with delight by many in past seasons. An overture, too, by SCHUBERT! does not that excite fine hopes? The *Tannhäuser* finale, by WAGNER, something new from MEYERBEER'S *Struensee*, and CHOPIN'S Concerto, with JAEHL;—all this for orchestra. And besides all this there will be Miss HENSLEY'S voice and Urso's violin.

BEETHOVEN'S "CHORAL SYMPHONY." This mighty work is soon to be performed for us, for the first time, by the "Germanians." Volunteers from the "Handel and Haydn Society" are rehearsing the chorus parts. This will make the list of the nine Symphonies complete in Boston, and will be the great musical event of this eventful season. We heard it once attempted in New York, in Castle Garden, some six years ago, at a so-called 'Beethoven Festival,' and by a huge extempore orchestra. The

rendering was confused enough, but still we shall never outlive the vague impression of the grandeur of the music.

OTTO DRESEL'S bill for Monday evening is as dainty and as solid as either of the two precedings. The Beethoven Sonata this time is for piano and violin—SCHULTZE'S violin. The Trio, Mendelssohn's second, with SCHULTZE and BERGMANN. For Piano Solos, Mr. D. plays a specimen each of Bach, Chopin, and Mendelssohn, and a whole series of little gems from Schumann's *Kinderscenen* and *Album*. Miss LEHMANN sings entirely new songs from Schubert, Franz, and Schumann.

OPERA IN BOSTON. Mme. ALBONI is actually coming and opens at the Howard Athenaeum on Monday, Jan. 31st. Then there will be excitement!

Indeed it already makes itself felt. The approach of the great contralto seems to have greatly quickened the subscription business towards the New Opera House project. Yesterday morning the amount of shares taken had gone up from \$60,000 to 125,000,—leaving \$75,000 to be raised. The refusal of the land expires in a day or two. Pray be in season, gentlemen, and let not our city lose this glorious chance.

MISS ELISE HENSLEY. We understand that this young lady will probably soon leave for Europe to pursue her musical studies.

The Germania Musical Society, at whose concerts she has appeared with so much success, propose giving her a benefit concert at an early day, for which occasion we bespeak the favor of our musical public who so nobly responded to a similar appeal made by Miss Phillips a year since.

New York.

THE OPERAS, both of ALBONI and of SONTAG, are always crowded, although both come on the same nights. The critics generally seem best pleased with Alboni's Rosina. The N. Y. Times thus compares the two presentations of "The Barber."

"There was nothing remarkably good in the support to Sontag in this opera, beyond the capital Barber of Badiali, and the orchestra led by Eckert. Rocco's debut was a disappointment. The new basso came unheralded, and will probably be suffered to go in the same way. The tenor, Pozzolini, was rather tame, as well as weak in voice, and, as to acting, a contemporary has well remarked that he left it all to others. Both Opera Houses are sadly off for a leading tenor, and Sontag's manager had better secure one, before he attempts in other cities what he pretends to do in this—a first class Opera.

"The Rosina of Madame Alboni is generally, we might almost say universally conceded, a complete success. Her rich and beautiful voice and quick and admirable perception of character, certainly grow rapidly on popular favor, with each successive composition. It is due to the Broadway troupe to say that she was only supported last evening. Signor Rovere proves himself a host as the buffo of the piece, and it has probably never been better done on the New York stage. The tenor, for a rarity, was not only in fair voice, but united with it, a good degree of spirit. The Barber of young Colletti was, of course, behind the veteran of the Niblo Company, but the orchestra not so; Signor Arliti leads with much satisfaction. The Don Basilio was infinitely better done than at the other house."

GOTTSCALK, the young Louisiana pianist, who composed the *Banancier* that Jaell plays, and other brilliant pieces in the modern school, and who has been captivating the natives therewith in France and Spain, arrived last week in the Humboldt. The *Home Journal* says he is "a handsome young fellow," and a man of talent, too.

PHILADELPHIA. The German Singing Academy performed Mozart's "Requiem" on Wednesday evening, at the Musical Fund Hall. They were assisted by the "Young Männerchor."

NEW ORLEANS.—During the week the opera company have given "Jerusalem," *Robert le Diable*, and *Sémiramide*. The first was well received, but the house was by no means full. Bordas and Paola sang with much spirit, and were in good voice, but the opera went off heavily. *Robert le Diable* met with a much better reception.

On Monday will be brought out, for the first time this season, Halevy's grand opera, "The Jewess," and on Tuesday it will probably be repeated. Thursday evening will witness the first performance of *Otello*, and thus, on Saturday, we may also expect a second representation. Jan. 8th.

CHICAGO, ILL.—The Eighth Promenade Soirée came off at Irving Hall Jan. 11th, and among the pieces per-

formed by the orchestra, we notice the grand *Pot Pourri* from Meyerbeer's opera, "The Prophet," and also the Overture to *Fidello*, by Beethoven. These concerts have a varied and free and easy character, that causes them to be deservedly popular, while the manner in which they are got up, secures respectability.—*Exchange Paper*.

CHICAGO PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY. A society with this name has recently been formed in this city of the lakes, which, it is said, has musical talent enough, if properly directed, to give it a high rank in the Western hemisphere of music. G. P. Abell, Esq., has been elected vocal conductor.

ST. LOUIS, Mo. We have seen an annual report, made last autumn, of the progress and condition of the "Polyhymnia Society," which we take to be an orchestral society, controlled chiefly by amateurs. It had given seven concerts during the year. The Report complains of small pecuniary income in proportion to expenses, nearly \$400 having been paid out to professional musicians, among other things, and proposes certain wholesome changes, which were substantially adopted, the principal of which were: the appointment of a competent professional musician as director of the orchestra and instructor of young men in the most necessary instruments, the introduction of classical music, the increase of the musical library, &c. LYMAN D. MORRIS was elected President, and WILLIAM ROBYN Musical Director. Eight concerts are to be given annually, and one for the benefit of the poor.

OLE BULL'S Concerts in this city, with STRAKOSCH and the infantile *prima donna*, PATTI, called forth from one of the newspaper critiques, at the end of much measured praise, the following, which is hopeful talk for the far West:

"We would respectfully intimate to Ole Bull, that there is a glorious minority in this city, who would esteem it a privilege to listen to him in something from the classical authors—Beethoven or Mendelssohn."

BUFFALO ACADEMY OF MUSIC. A Buffalo paper says:

"This excellent institution continues on its successful career of usefulness. The Oratorio of David is under rehearsal, and will be brilliantly brought out. Its schools are in successful operation—one for young ladies, others juvenile, (in churches and various quarters of the city). The Academy thus far has been admirably managed in all its departments, and it has been peculiarly fortunate in the selection of its musical conductor, Prof. W. F. WEBSTER, who is one of the best and most successful instructors in vocal music that ever visited our city.

INDIANAPOLIS.—Great Convention of Brass Bands on the 22d of February next! Upwards of thirty bands, says the *Ind. State Journal*, have accepted an invitation to attend. It is proposed to unite them into one vast band of nearly four hundred instruments. Mr. G. B. Downie is the moving spirit. Shade of Washington, what a noisy birth-day celebration!

THE RICHMOND (VA.) SACRED MUSIC SOCIETY, organized early last summer, and now in full operation, with a fine prospect of success, is well calculated to be the means, or instrument of making the necessary systematized effort for the attainment of so great an object as the cultivation of public taste for sacred music. We understand that it numbers at present about 150 ladies and gentlemen; that they are mostly communicants of the several religious denominations of the city, who recognize among themselves no sectarian distinction; and that they possess a very respectable amount of musical talent and qualification. Their constitution and by-laws contemplate, not only their own improvement by weekly practice, but the improvement of all classes of the public by the establishment of schools for instruction throughout the city.

MILWAUKIE. There is an orchestral Society here of Germans, who, wherever they locate in the wide West, scatter some seeds of the good music of the *Vaterland*. We have the programme of the "Twenty-sixth Concert for the Members," Jan. 10th, '53. It contains part of a Trio for strings by Beethoven, two Songs by Beethoven, one with chorus and orchestra, the bass song from the *Zauberflöte*, besides more modern things.

SAN FRANCISCO. Music is fast establishing her humanizing oracles amid the noisy carnival of the gold-hunters. A paper of Nov. 16th contains a letter from Sig. Biscaccianti, explaining the composition and require-

ments of a true Italian Opera company, the expense, &c., and announcing the desire of the *troupe* then in Lima to visit California. The Signor proposes a plan of subscription, and should it be realized, engages to set out for Lima and make all the arrangements. The Californians, we doubt not, can support an opera, and with the opportunity of the *troupe* above named, and of so fine a *prima donna* as the BISCACCIANTI, should proceed to prove their love of music at once.

By latest dates, Dec. 16th, Miss CATHARINE HAYES had given five concerts in San Francisco. The *choice of the first seat brought \$1,165!* The Fire Companies gave the lady an escort; and there was quite a Barnum *furor*. The *Alta California* thinks her great in ballads, but hardly up to Italian opera, or Handel's songs. Mr. Loder was her conductor.

A Philharmonic (orchestral) Society has been organized here, under the conduct of Mr. GEORGE LODER, who has filled the same post honorably in New York.

London.

The NEW HARMONIC UNION, Mr. Benedict, conductor, gave its first public performance in Exeter Hall, Dec. 17th. The performance is pronounced admirable.

"It consisted of the sixth Motett of John Sebastian Bach, and Mr. Charles Horsley's new oratorio, 'Joseph.' The orchestra and chorus numbered five hundred performers, including the most eminent instrumentalists of the Philharmonic and Opera bands. The principal singers were the Misses Birch, Miss Williams, Mr. Lockey, Mr. Lawler, and Mr. Beale.

Bach's vocal music may be said to be unknown in this country, and yet some of his great sacred works are scarcely inferior in grandeur and sublimity to those of Handel himself. The motett performed last night was but a small specimen of his genius; but it made a beginning, we hope, to the gradual production of his 'Passione.' This motett was entirely choral, unrelieved by the admixture of any solo passages. It was, however, a piece of most masterly counterpoint, rich and grateful to the ear, and terminating with one of those grand Lutheran chorales of which we have such fine specimens in the works of Mendelssohn. It was carefully sung, but with too uniform a coloring; and the organ was overplayed. Bach's motets are meant to be sung without accompaniment, and are so sung in Germany.

"The libretto of Mr. Horsley's oratorio is constructed very much after the form of Mendelssohn's 'St. Paul,' and 'Elijah.' The story of Joseph and his brethren is told in the words of the book of Genesis, intermingled with passages of devotion and reflection extracted from the Psalms, and other parts of the Scriptures. The narrative is given in a series of recitatives; and the dialogue and other portions form the airs, concerted pieces, and chorus. The music does great honor to the genius of the composer. The oftener it is heard, the more it will be appreciated.... We were struck with the admirable manner in which the vocal parts are written, both in the solos and choruses. The phrases are round and flowing, always within the natural pitch of the voices.... Mr. Horsley, too, is a master of the art of instrumentation. His orchestral parts are rich, varied, and full of delicate and beautiful combinations. But he is infected with the prevailing vice of the day; he brings his drums and brazen instruments into such violent action, that design, melody, and harmony are lost amid the astounding din.... In one place he has made an oversight in his reading of the libretto. When Joseph relates to his brethren his dream presaging his future greatness, he is repeatedly interrupted by their abrupt exclamations of displeasure. These are made into short, stormy choruses, in which Mr. Horsley evidently had it in view to produce effects similar to the clamor of the furious multitude in 'St. Paul' and 'Elijah'; but he ought to have remembered that here there was no clamorous multitude, but only the eleven youths with whom their brother was conversing....

"His choruses, with few exceptions, are in plain harmony, of note against note, like the harmony of a chorale, or psalm tune, and without those imitations, responses, and other contrapuntal resources which give variety and interest to choral music. Where such variety is given, it is by florid figures in the orchestral accompaniments. But as a set-off against all this simplicity, there is an 'Amen' fugue at the end, as formal and scholastic as any admirer of the old school could desire. In the airs and concerted pieces there are many charming things. There is a quartet, 'The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous,' which is most beautiful, and worthy to be compared to the finest of Mendelssohn's pieces of the same kind."—*London News*.

The Programme of the Union, for 1852-3, promises that:

The second performance of the season will comprise Mendelssohn's 'Waldpurgis Night'; Beethoven's 'Ruins of Athens'; a New Overture, composed by Mr. Henry Leslie, and a Piano-forte Concerto, by W. S. Bennett, to be performed by Miss Arabella Goddard. Mr. Pierson's new Oratorio, 'Jerusalem,' which has recently created considerable sensation, will also be put in rehearsal, and produced. It is contemplated to prepare during the season, Mendelssohn's 'Lobgesang,' &c.; Bach's 'Passione' and Motetts; and some of the ecclesiastical

music of Mozart, Weber, Spohr, Cherubini, &c. The secular works will comprise, besides those already mentioned, Handel's 'Alexander's Feast'; Haydn's 'Seasons,' and 'Leonora,' a new *cantata*, by Mr. Macfarren.... The eminent composer, Mr. William Sterndale Bennett, has undertaken to complete the composition of a new sacred work, which they confidently hope to be able to perform before the termination of the present season.

The SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY performed the "Messiah," Dec. 10th, in which the new soprano, Mme. FIORENTINI, seems to have charmed the critics. Among the works to be brought out are "Judas Maccabæus," Mozart's "Requiem," and Beethoven's great "Mass (the 2d) in D."

Paris.

Just now the *Grand Opera* may be said to be a world without a *prima donna*. The principal lady, Madame Tedesco, has a mezzo *soprano* voice, two octaves and more in extent,—rich, even, powerful, and so far as tone goes, more effective than Mme. Alboni's, because it is more brilliant. As a singer, however, Madame Tedesco is but a *kuchaback* Alboni, without warmth, or charm, or extraordinary facility. As an actress, she has no power, and pretends to none,—stands solidly still,—and lets the play be played out without offering any interference. There is small chance of her long keeping her present position. Ere long, too, the *Grand Opera* will have to seek for a new tenor;—since M. Roger is paying the penalty of ambition by singing on a reduced allowance of voice, while M. Gueymard, who had a golden opportunity, instead of improving it by taking a singing-master, conceived himself thenceforward called on to cry aloud, and do little beside. The recent revival of *Moise* has made it too clear that he has neither grace, taste, nor expression. On the other hand, M. Obin, who performs the part of *Moise*, has made a most favorable impression by his grand bass voice, well-regulated method of singing, and expressive dignity as an actor.

M. Réber's 'Le Père Gaillard,' at the *Opera Comique*, is simply one of the most charming French comic operas, old or young, that was ever written; so eminently charming, and comic, and French,—so full of fresh melody and neat musical ingenuity.—*Athenæum*.

Advertisements.

BOSTON MUSIC HALL.

Fifth Grand Subscription Concert

OF THE GERMANIA MUSICAL SOCIETY,

WILL TAKE PLACE

ON SATURDAY EVENING, JAN. 22, 1853,

ASSISTED BY

CAMILLA URSO, Miss ELISE HENSLE, and ALFRED JAEHL.

PROGRAMME.

Part I.

1. Grand Symphony, No. 4, in F major, Op. 86, 'Die Weihe der Töne'.....L. Spohr. (Characteristic Tone-Picture, in form of a Symphony.)
2. Concerto for Piano, in E minor,.....Chopin. (With full Orchestral accompaniment.) ALFRED JAEHL.
3. Le Tremolo, Caprice sur un Theme de Beethoven, for Violin,.....De Beriot. Performed by CAMILLA URSO.

Part II.

4. Grand Overture to the Opera "Rosamunda," (manuscript,) 1st time,.....Franz Schubert.
5. Aria, from Don Pasquale, "La Morale in tutto questo,".....Donizetti. Sung by Miss HENSLE.
6. Grand Polonaise to the Tragedy "Struensee," 1st time,.....Meyerbeer.
7. Duet, Piano and Violin, "William Tell," (by request,).....Osborne & De Beriot. Performed by ALFRED JAEHL and CAMILLA URSO.
8. Finale. "Tannhäuser,".....R. Wagner.

Single Tickets, 50 cents each, to be had at the Music Stores and Hotels, also at the door on the evening of the Concert. Doors open at 6½; Concert commences at 7½ o'clock.

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MONDAY EVENING, JANUARY 24, 1853,

IN MR. JOHNSON'S MUSIC HALL, (in the New Building next south of Tremont Temple,) assisted by

MISS CAROLINE LEHMANN, WILLIAM SCHULTZE, and CARL BERGMANN.

PROGRAMME.

PART I.

1. Grand Sonata, A minor, for Piano and Violin,.....Beethoven. Adagio Sostenuto. Presto. Andante con Variazioni. Finale, Presto. OTTO DRESEL and WILLIAM SCHULTZE.
2. Ave Maria—Song,.....Robert Franz. Miss LEHMANN.
3. Scenes from Childhood: Little Pieces for Piano Solo,.....Schumann. 1. About strange countries and people. 2. Curious Story. 3. "Tag." 4. Child beseeching. 5. Happiness enough. 6. Important occurrence. 7. Reverie. 8. Knight of the Hobby-horse. 9. Child falling asleep. 10. "May, dearest May, soon thou art here again!" 11. Hunting Song.
4. Rauschender Wald, mein Aufenthalt: Song,.....Schubert. Miss LEHMANN.

PART II.

5. Piano Solos—Fugue, C minor,.....Bach. Berceuse,.....Chopin. Scherzo, F sharp minor,.....Mendelssohn.
6. "Es grünet ein Nussbaum," Song,.....Schumann. Miss LEHMANN.
7. Second Trio for Piano, Violin, and 'Cello,.....Mendelssohn. Allegro energico e con fuoco. Andante espressivo. Scherzo. Finale.

OTTO DRESEL, WM. SCHULTZE, and CARL BERGMANN.

The Concert will begin precisely at half past seven. Tickets, \$1, to be had at Reed's and Johnson's Music Stores.

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2. No seat in the building shall be removed from one place to another, nor any seat be carried into the building from without, except by order of the Superintendent.
3. No person shall have a lighted cigar within the building.
4. No person shall touch the gas fixtures in any part of the building, except by order of the Superintendent.
5. The "Ladies' Room" is exclusively for female visitors to the Hall, as a cloak-room, dressing-room, &c., and gentlemen are not permitted to enter this room at any time.
6. The Superintendent will be in his office (entrance from Winter street) to receive applications for the use of the Hall and Lecture room, every day, (Sundays excepted) from 8 to 6 P. M.
7. Persons heretofore hiring the Boston Music Hall, for the purpose of giving Concerts or other entertainments, shall be required to dispose of the seats by their numbers, unless, on special application to the Committee of Directors, this regulation shall be dispensed with.

Published, per order of the Board of Directors. F. L. BATCHELDER, Secretary.

H11

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